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Trial of 3 Bombing Suspects Delayed

By CRAIG R. WHITNEY

In the midst of new explosions and bomb scares yesterday, a Federal Judge postponed the trial of three persons accused of bombing eight buildings here last fall.

The trial was to have begun next Wednesday, but the defendants argued that public concern and "hysteria" over the latest bombings, and news reports linking them with the recent explosions, made a fair trial impossible.

Judge Milton Pollack, saying he wanted "to lean over backwards to insure for these defendants their right to a fair trial," granted a delay until April 29.

But, he said, "I wish to make it clear that this is done not because of prejudicial publicity, but because of unrelated events similar to the crimes charged in this indictment."

One of the news stories cited by the defendants' lawyers described an attempted escape last Saturday by Samuel J. Melville, who has been in jail, with bail set at $100,000, since his arrest last Nov. 12. His alleged escape attempt was not disclosed until Wednesday.

Mr. Melville, John D. Hughey 3d, of 228 East Third Street, and Jane L. Alpert, 22, of 235 East Fourth Street, are under Federal charges of bombing two Government buildings and an Army truck last fall.

A fourth suspect, Patricia E. Swinton, whois still at large, is also accused, with them, of bombing six other buildings between last July 27 and Nov. 12. Mr. Melville is the alleged leader of the group.

His lawyers denounced stories of his attempted escape as well as others describing attempts by the police to determine if there was any relationship between the Federal case and an explosion last Friday in a house on West 11th Street, as prejudicial, pre-trial publicity.

"Whoever was responsible for the escape 'tip' has not aided the fair or prompt administration of justice," Judge Pollack said, but he denied that the recent news stories alone would prevent a fair trial.

As for the West 11th Street case, Assistant United States Attorney John J. Doyle 3d said yesterday that pictures of Miss Swinton, who is still at large, people in that neighborhood to determine whether she had been seen there, but that no relationship had been established between her and the explosion there.

Sources in the Federal Bureau of Investigation also said yesterday that they have not been able to identify the body of a woman found in the wreckage of the house as that of Miss Swinton or anybody else.

Sources also said that no clear link had been found between a group that claims to have set off three bombs yesterday morning and the Melville group.